

Spaceward Bound: Mojave 2010 Weather at Zzyzx and What To Bring

The average temperatures for March/April at Baker, CA (which is 9 miles SSW of Zzyzx) are highs in the low 80's and lows in the low 50's. Two years ago it was warm (80's) and sunny except for one day when it rained and the wind blew like crazy. Please bring a lightweight poncho or other lightweight rain jacket with hood. We will still be out and about – even if it's raining !!!

Remember that you will be in the desert – there is nothing except atmosphere between you and the sun. In addition, the sun reflects off the light colored soils in the desert – thus you can get sunburned even while wearing a hat! Sun BLOCK, not simply sun screen, is critical – particularly if your skin hasn't seen much sun over the past couple of months! Now is not the time to work on your tan!

Shoes

- A pair to be worn in the field, lightweight, good support, comfortable for lots of walking (sometimes over rough/rocky terrain). Note: Within about 2 minutes of arriving at Zzyzx your shoes will be dusty and they will only get more dusty as the week goes on. If it rains, they will get muddy. Don't bring shoes that you want to keep clean !!!
- If you want to give your feet a break in camp, bring a pair of lightweight shoes or TEVA's with socks just for walking around camp.
- You may want to bring a pair of flip-flops for the shower
- Note: don't plan on putting on flip-flops/TEVA's to make a midnight run to the bathroom – wear a full shoe – beasties are out and about at night and they get cranky when they're stepped on!

Sleeping bag and pillow, or sheets for single bed and pillow – your choice

WIDE-BRIMMED HAT FOR SUN PROTECTION

Lightweight long pants for the field (shorts can be worn but leave you vulnerable to sunburn and scratches from rocks and bushes). Shorts at the station are fine.

Sunglasses

Lightweight long sleeve shirts.

A fleece or similar warm jacket for evening, particularly if the high 40's sounds cold to you!

Two refillable water bottles

Flashlight for caving and those midnight runs to the bathroom; if you happen to have a UV flashlight, bring it along too.

SUN BLOCK

Lotion for dry skin

Towels

Toiletries & medications

Backpack/fanny pack – something to carry water bottles and journal out into the field

Speaking of journals ... if you are keeping your journal on a computer, please bring a small notebook and pencil for taking notes and making drawings/diagrams in the field. You won't remember everything!

Camera

Note: if you don't look ratty by the end of the week, you will not have been doing Spaceward Bound !!

PLEASE PACK LIGHTLY. THERE IS LIMITED ROOM IN THE VANS AND YOU WILL BE SHARING A ROOM WITH SEVERAL OTHER PEOPLE. Note that if you want to wash out an item of clothing, it will dry very quickly!

REMEMBER: DON'T PUT IT ON UNTIL YOU SHAKE IT OUT !!! YOU'D BE LOOKING FOR A NICE SOFT PLACE TO SLEEP TOO IF YOUR NORMAL HABITAT WAS THE HARD DESERT GROUND !!!

***** More info ! *****

There are power outlets and overhead lights in every room.

Most cell phones will work at the station – but probably not in the field.

There is wi-fi which is useable by both Mac and PC. However the bandwidth to the satellite is limited so not everyone will be able to be on-line at the same time. Write your emails, etc., then log on and send them. Don't stay on-line while composing. Also, download your emails and then get off line – don't read while on line.

There are some t-shirts, hats etc. available for purchase at the station, some postcards etc.

Remember, we'll be on a National Preserve, so collecting any specimens of anything is illegal unless you have a permit. If you see something that you want to bring back to your classroom, ask one of the scientists who does have a permit to collect.